Death from Nostalgic Sentiment Or A New Narrative for Rural Ireland?

Rural areas are diverse, each facing a unique set of opportunities and challenges that are often closely informed by their proximity to urban centres. Proximity to larger urban centres can have a strong bearing on the vibrancy - or not - of rural towns and villages.

The vibrancy or vulnerability of rural places can also be impacted by the rolenostalgia and associated narratives play in influencing the rural development agenda. How rural change is understood shapes how the future is imagined in terms of both policy and practitioner responses.

This day conference provides a timely opportunity for dialogue and debate on the future of rural Ireland, particularly our rural towns and villages. The event will consider the current nexus in rural policy and practice, and the imperative of framing a new narrative for rural Ireland - without losing the ‘essence’ of place. A shared challenge for central, regional and local government, together with rural communities, is to co-create vibrant rural societies that embrace increasingly diverse rural economies and are sustainable into the future.

This event considers the interventions required to sustain and build vibrant rural societies across the island of Ireland. As with the previous events in this series, it recognizes that realizing the future of Rural Ireland requires a cross-disciplinary dialogue that has regard to the realities of 21st Century living, and the impact of this on both the built and natural environment. The conference will have contributions demonstrating experience, best practice of international level.

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The All Island Local Authority Forum is a strategic partnership comprising Chief Executives from the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SLUCE) NI and Chief Executives from the County and City Management Association (CCMA) ROI. The Local Authorities Forum was created in early 2020 following local authority group operating at a local government level and incorporated terms of the All Island Forum in its terms and development/meaningful cross border relationships has been a driving force for this new group. This group is committed to the advancement and delivery of mutual interest to both administrations and the work of the Forum is developed through practical joint projects and the sharing of knowledge, expertise and best practice.

The mission statement for the All Island Local Authority Forum is as follows:

“to advance mutual understanding by promoting practical co-operation between local authorities on the island of Ireland, through maintaining shared learning and the production of tangible benefits for services and local communities.

The work of the Forum currently focuses on six key areas as follows: Strategic/Development Planning, Community Planning & Place Shaping, Tourism, Shared Services, Leadership and Housing.

Further information on the work of the Forum is available at www.cooperationireland.org.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR LOCAL & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) is a North-South U.S. partnership. It is formally recognized as a unique component of the recommendations for the development of high-quality, social and economic infrastructure to make areas and regions more resilient on the island of Ireland, and elsewhere. The ICLRD has developed a variety of programs and initiatives to strengthen local government in Ireland and the USA, including, the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at Maynooth University, the Belfast School of Architecture and Built Environment at Queen’s University and the National Centre for Green Growth at University of Maryland.

A central objective of the ICLRD is to strengthen the policy and operational linkages between central, regional and local policy makers and the tools and techniques used to effect change in the built environment. The ICLRD has developed a variety of programs and initiatives to strengthen local government in Ireland and the USA, including, the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at Maynooth University, the Belfast School of Architecture and Built Environment at Queen’s University and the National Centre for Green Growth at University of Maryland.

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